

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS TIJUANA 0444

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EGEN CARR BGEN MX
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR LUCEY VISITS TIJUANA

1. AMBASSADOR LUCEY VISITED TIJUANA AUGUST 11-13, HIS FIRST TRIP TO A CONSTITUENT POST. THE AMBASSADOR'S APPROACH WAS THAT HE WAS HERE TO LEARN ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES AND WHAT HE COULD DO TO ASSIST. THAT, TOGETHER WITH HIS EVIDENT QUICK GRASP OF BAJA INTERESTS AND A SCHEDULE WHICH MISSED ALMOST NOTHING, PRODUCED A COMPLETE SUCCESS IN TERMS OF DEMONSTRATING TO BAJA CALIFORNIANS HIGH LEVEL USG INTEREST IN AND SYMPATHY TOWARD BORDER PROBLEMS AND ISSUES. MEDIA COVERAGE IN TIJUANA AND SAN DIEGO WAS EXCELLENT.

2. COMMENT: AT THE RISK OF STATING THE OBVIOUS, WE WISH TO OBSERVE THAT BAJA LEADERS WILL BE HOPING AND LOOKING FOR CONCRETE RESULTS FROM AMBASSADOR'S VISIT (SEE PARA 4 THIS TEL). ANY FUTURE DECISIONS ANNOUNCED THIS REGARD SHOULD BE MADE IN MANNER TO GIVE FULL AND APPROPRIATE COVERAGE IN BAJA.

3. AMBASSADOR'S SCHEDULE CONSISTED OF CONGEN RECEPTION, DINNER WITH AREA POLITICAL, BUSINESS, LEGAL AND MILITARY LEADERS, MEETING WITH BAJA GOVERNOR CASTELLANOS, BREAKFAST WITH GOVERNOR-ELECT ROBERTO DE LA MADRID, CALL ON TIJUANA MAYOR MARQUEZ ARCE, LAYING OF WREATH ON BENITO JUAREZ MONUMENT, TOUR OF SAN YSIDRO PORT OF ENTRY FACILITIES, TOUR OF TWO BORDER INDUSTRY COMPANIES AND MEETING

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WITH EXECUTIVES, AN EVENING (SIX HOURS) WITH THE BORDER PATROL AT SAN YSIDRO, VISIT TO LA MESA PRISON (THREE HOURS) AND MEETING WITH US PRISONERS, MEETING WITH TIJUANA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPRESENTATIVES, AND WALKING TOUR OF DOWNTOWN AREA. IN ADDITION THERE WERE TWO FORMAL PRESS CONFERENCES, INNUMERABLE AD HOC CONFERENCES AND THREE PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH SAN DIEGO PRESS REPRESENTATIVES.

4. MEXICAN BUSINESS AND POLITICAL LEADERS WHOM THE AMBASSADOR MET WERE INTERESTED ALMOST ENTIRELY IN HOW THE UNITED STATES COULD HELP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE BORDER AREA. PRINCIPAL ISSUES WHICH AROSE WERE (1) MORE US PERSONNEL AT THE SAN YSIDRO PORT OF ENTRY IN ORDER TO REDUCE WAITING PERIODS FOR TRAVELERS AND THUS ENCOURAGE TOURISM (DELAYS OF ONE HOUR OR MORE HAVE OFTEN BEEN THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION THIS SUMMER); (2) CONSTRUCTION OF A SECOND BORDER CROSSING ON OTAY MESA, A FEW MILES TO THE EAST OF SAN YSIDRO TO HANDLE COMMERCIAL AND TOURIST TRAFFIC AND REDUCE CONGESTION IN DOWNTOWN TIJUANA; (3) US SUPPORT FOR BORDER TWIN PLANT INDUSTRY, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO LIFTING OF QUOTAS ON TEXTILES OR AT LEAST THE APPLICATION OF ONE GENERAL QUOTA RATHER THAN SPECIFIC LIMITS ON INDIVIDUAL KINDS OF GARMENTS, AND LIFTING OR MODERATION OF TARIFFS ON FINISHED GOODS AND FOREIGN COMPONENTS; AND (4) US SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCE IN TIJUANA. SUCH SUPPORT COULD INCLUDE DECREASING OR LIFTING ENTIRELY RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORT OF MERCHANDISE AND LIQUOR PURCHASED BY TOURISTS. BAJA BUSINESSMEN NOTED - CORRECTLY IN OUR VIEW - THAT US DOLLARS SPENT IN TIJUANA ARE QUICKLY RESPENT IN UNITED STATES.

5. SUBJECTS RAISED PRIVATELY BY GOVERNOR-ELECT DE LA MADRID WITH AMBASSADOR WERE ALSO LARGELY ECONOMIC: ILLEGALS IN UNITED STATES, ASSEMBLY (TWIN) PLANTS, SECOND BORDER CROSSING, 1976 INCOME TAX LAW RESTRICTION ON CONVENTIONS ABROAD, LONG-TERM CREDITS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, INFRASTRUCTURE AND AGRICULTURAL GROWTH, IMPROVEMENT OF MEXICAN TOURIST IMAGE IN THE UNITED STATES, UNCLASSIFIED

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DUTY-FREE SALE OF MEXICAN GOODS IN THE UNITED STATES, PETROLEUM AND GAS SALES TO THE UNITED STATES, FAMILY PLANNING, AND CREATION OF A BINATIONAL COMMITTEE BY PRESIDENTIAL DESIGNATION TO HANDLE US-MEXICO BORDER MATTERS. THE AMBASSADOR SUBSEQUENTLY FLOATED THE LAST ITEM WITH THE PRESS, WHERE IT RECEIVED INTERESTED COVERAGE.

6. OTHER ISSUES BESIDES ECONOMIC ONES LISTED IN PARA 3 WHICH PRESS PROMINENTLY REPORTED WERE TRANSFER OF US PRISONERS AND CONDITION OF US PRISONERS IN LA MESA (SOME LIKELY BE TRANSFERRED THIS YEAR; NO COMPLAINTS OF BAD TREATMENT IN LA MESA); AND (2) PRESIDENT CARTER'S PROPOSALS FOR HANDLING ILLEGALS IN UNITED STATES. KENT

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